

Breaking Down the

BARRIERS

Alberta Infrastructure

February 2000



Parking Policy Review

UPDATE!

Forums to review the parking placard policy for persons with disabilities were held on November 25 in Edmonton and

November 30 in Calgary. Stakeholders identified the major mobility problems facing their own members, and suggested ways of ensuring that those having the greatest needs can find the parking stalls they require.

A lot of excellent information was generated at the forums, and from written and phone submissions. All information has been compiled into the **Parking Placards for Persons with Disabilities Policy Review: Summary of Discussion Points**, which was mailed to participants before the end of December.

Using the information gathered, the Subcommittee on Parking Placards for

Persons with Disabilities will be drafting a revised parking placard policy, which will be distributed to stakeholders in Spring, 2000 for their review and feedback.

If you would like to comment on the parking placard issue, and/or receive a copy of the proceedings, please contact:

Sara Wong

Infrastructure Policy and Planning

Alberta Infrastructure

Phone: (780) 427-9781

Fax: (780) 422-1070

e-mail: sara.wong@gov.ab.ca

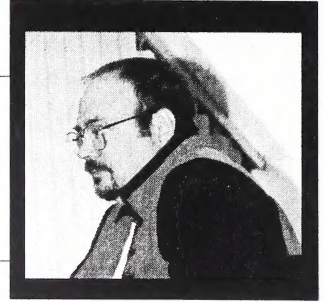
Did you know?

All Alberta Infrastructure barrier-free materials, including Breaking Down the Barriers, can be accessed at <http://www.tu.gov.ab.ca> by clicking the "Barrier Free Transportation" option. For printed copies of these materials, please contact Sara Wong as above.

Profile – Member of the Advisory Committee on Barrier Free Transportation

Name: Larry Pempeit

Occupation: Director, Member and Community Affairs,
Canadian Paraplegic Association (CPA)



How did you become interested in transportation issues?

My interest in transportation comes from a personal perspective. In 1966, I was in a vehicle collision that left me a quadriplegic which meant that I had to use a wheelchair for mobility.

In the 70s and 80s, specialized transportation was nearly non-existent. For me to attend university and later work, I had to catch ordinary taxis. More often than not, they refused to take me or would take hours to arrive. Going anywhere was a time consuming hassle.

I, like many other young people in those days, decided that change needed to occur. People with special transportation needs have to have access to the community in order to take a role in society.

I remember wheeling around the old City Hall with other people with disabilities, holding a sign demanding City Council provide special transportation services. I also remember sitting in the Gallery at City Hall and in the Legislature calling for government to take action.

It worked! One year later DATS was born.

I continue to actively advocate for transportation services for people with disabilities.

What is your role on the Barrier Free Committee and why did you become involved?

The CPA has been a member of the Advisory Committee for many years. I became part of it when our delegate left CPA on sick leave. Because I have a keen interest in issues faced by people with disabilities, it was a natural fit for me.

I see my role on this committee as a consumer. I can bring to the table the perspective of a special transportation user. I have experience in using DATS, regular transit, modified taxis, bus, train, and air service, and I drive my own adapted van.

I also represent, as part of CPA, more than 2,000 spinal injured individuals. Nearly all these people require modified transportation.

What are the major concerns or issues you have related to accessible transportation?

For many years we appeared to be making progress in our goal to meet the transportation needs of people with disabilities.

Now, because of budget restrictions, overuse (or in some cases underuse), misinformation and failure of consumers to voice their concerns, we are beginning to see the system erode.

Some issues I feel especially strong about are:

- ❑ Special Lift Equipped Van Taxis service has disappeared in Calgary and is in danger of disappearing in Edmonton.

- ❑ DATS costs continue to climb and usage is increasing. City Council at the same time is holding the line on budget expenditures.
 - ❑ The Parking Placard Program is being abused and over-subscribed. People who use a wheelchair are having difficulty in finding accessible parking space that is wide enough for them to get in and out of their vehicle.
 - ❑ All new regular transit buses must be accessible for individuals who use a wheelchair.
 - ❑ Airlines should treat people having disabilities with fairness and dignity.
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Did you know?

The Lethbridge Handi-Bus Association is accepting applications for the position of Operations Manager. If you are interested in this position, please forward your resume to the Selection Committee, 207 13 Street, North, Lethbridge, Alberta, T1H 2R6.

Calgary Parking Authority's Parking Placards Campaign

Mayor Al Duerr proclaimed Nov. 30, 1999, **Disabled Parking Awareness Day** in Calgary. Motorists were encouraged to be considerate and leave the designated parking stalls and zones to those who really need them.

Vehicles parked in parking stalls designated for people with disabilities received special attention during the Christmas season. The Calgary Parking Authority (CPA) asked parking control officers to make doubly sure that vehicles displayed the appropriate placards or license plates when parked in designated stalls.

"During the Christmas season, when parking is at a premium, the public is more likely to park in a designated stall, often rationalizing that it is just for a minute," said Dale Fraser, General Manager of CPA. "This means the spot is no longer available to a person with disabilities."

The public is becoming less tolerant of people taking advantage of designated parking stalls when not entitled. Vehicles parking in designated stalls must display a placard or have a special license plate.

Receiving a parking ticket means a fine of \$150 and possible impound of the vehicle. It is also illegal to park in a designated bus or passenger loading zone.



"The Calgary Parking Authority wants to stress the importance of leaving the designated stalls to those who really need them," said Al Bazar, manager of Enforcement Services. "We hope to reduce the abuse of designated parking through public awareness rather than enforcement."

In addition, those with placards were encouraged to use them appropriately. Allowing a relative or friend to take advantage of a parking placard means someone who needs the spot may be

unable to park. Common sense and consideration apply to the use of the placards.



The Disabled Parking Awareness Campaign was promoted throughout the month of December when parking was at a premium. Radio

sponsorship of traffic reports, posters in shopping malls and print advertising all reminded the public that designated stalls are "there for a reason. Be reasonable and leave the designated stalls for persons with disabilities".

A total of 159 parking tickets were issued to offending vehicles parked in

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designated disabled stalls in Calgary during the period of December 1, 1999 to January 7, 2000.

The Calgary Parking Authority provides parking enforcement services that increase public safety, improve traffic flow, and assist with the proper use of

residential and commercial parking.

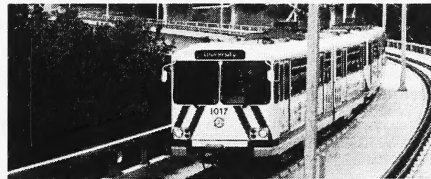
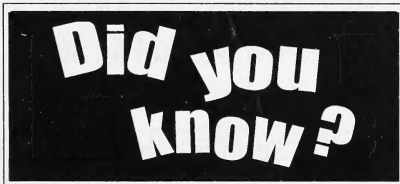
For more information, please contact:

Joan Hickie

Public Affairs Coordinator

Calgary Parking Authority

Phone: (403) 974-0687



Have you tried out the new access ramps on Edmonton Transit System's Light Rail line? ETS is installing an access ramp on either side of every LRT car over the next three years. This is one of many initiatives being undertaken to ensure a barrier free and accessible transit system that meets all needs.

Accessible Taxis to Edmonton International Airport



Recently, there has been some confusion over the accessible ground transportation policy at

the Edmonton International Airport. The Sky Shuttle provides service between the downtown core and the Edmonton International Airport at a rate of \$11 per person one way or \$18 per person return trip.

There have been incidents where persons with disabilities, needing accessible Sky Shuttle service, have called a local taxi company to make their own arrangements, booking anywhere from four to 24 hours in advance, and in some cases, being charged the taxi rate of \$35 one way.

It is important to clarify that the Yellow Cab and Co-op Taxi companies, both of whom can provide accessible taxi service, have different policies on the provision of accessible taxis to Edmonton International Airport.

Yellow Cab is the only taxi cab company in Edmonton with a contractual obligation with Edmonton International Airport to

provide Sky Shuttle van service to persons with disabilities. To book accessible Sky Shuttle van service, the customer must:

- ▣ Call Yellow Cab.
- ▣ Request Sky Shuttle van service.
- ▣ State their physical requirements (e.g. wheelchair/scooter user).
- ▣ Confirm with the dispatcher that they will be charged the Sky Shuttle fare of \$11 per person one way or \$18 per person return trip.

If the customer does not request Sky Shuttle van service when booking with Yellow Cab, they will be charged the regular metered rate for a taxi (i.e., \$35 between the downtown core and the Edmonton International Airport, and regular metered rates for all other areas).

The Shuttle Service can be pre-booked 24 hours in advance. The customer will travel in an accessible mini van operated by Yellow Cab (i.e., it will not be marked with the Sky Shuttle decals).

Co-op Taxi does not provide Sky Shuttle van service, but they do provide accessible taxi service. The customer

must book four hours in advance and state that they need an accessible taxi. Co-op Taxi will charge the regular taxi metered rate for all customers, including \$35 between the downtown core and the Edmonton International Airport.

For more information, please contact:

Jackie Miller

Ground Transportation Coordinator

Edmonton Regional Airports Authority

Phone: (780) 890-8385

Calgary Handi-Bus Association's Prototype Accessible Taxi

In October 1999, the Calgary Handi-Bus Association (CHBA) converted a GM Safari van into an accessible taxi. This vehicle was recommended for testing in the **Accessible Taxi Viability Evaluation** report that was sponsored by the former Alberta Transportation and Utilities department and published in early 1999.

Funded by CHBA, Calgary Transit and Alberta Infrastructure, the vehicle meets Calgary's proposed accessible vehicle standards. The vehicle can accommodate one person using a mobility device and four ambulatory passengers.

The GM Safari vehicle has served as a test case to determine how best to ensure the return of accessible taxis to Calgary streets. The van began an on-road viability trial on October 30, 1999, with excellent customer and driver reaction.

An evaluation report will be completed in Spring 2000.

For more information about Calgary's accessible taxi pilot project, please contact:

Pat Pellegrino

General Manager and CEO

Calgary Handi-Bus Association

Phone: (403) 276-8028

To receive a copy of the **Accessible Taxi Viability Evaluation** report, please contact:

Sara Wong

Infrastructure Policy and Planning

Alberta Infrastructure

Phone: (780) 427-9781

Fax: (780) 422-1070

e-mail: sara.wong@gov.ab.ca

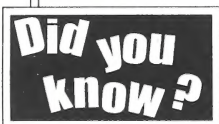


Calgary Accessible Taxi Stakeholder Group

The Calgary Accessible Taxi Stakeholder Group was established in June 1999 to evaluate accessible taxi options and develop a service model. The working group is currently exploring ways of restoring accessible taxi service in Calgary, in cooperation with consumers, the taxi industry, Calgary Transit, Calgary Handi-Bus Association and Calgary Taxi Commission.

For more information, please contact:

Stephen Hansen, Superintendent
Accessible Transportation Services,
Calgary Transit
Phone: (403) 537-7826



In August 1999, the Alberta Safety Codes Council released a Barrier Free Design Guide to assist designers, builders and others to incorporate barrier free design standards and principles in their projects. While the Guide is a useful reference, the Alberta Building Code should be consulted for all regulatory requirements.

For more information about the Guide, please contact:

Safety Codes Council
Phone: (780) 413-0099 or 1-888-413-0099 or visit
their website at: <http://www.safetycodes.ab.ca>

Breaking Down the Barriers

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Editorial Board:

Peter Dawes, Senior Policy Advisor,
Passenger Transportation, Policy
and Planning,
Tel. (780) 415-0687,
Fax (780) 422-1070, or
e-mail peter.dawes@gov.ab.ca

Sara Wong, Policy Advisor,
Surface Passenger and Barrier Free
Transportation, Policy and Planning,
Tel. (780) 427-9781,
Fax (780) 422-1070, or
e-mail sara.wong@gov.ab.ca

John Tuckwell, Editor,
Communications,
Tel. (780) 422-0432,
Fax (780) 466-3166, or
e-mail john.tuckwell@gov.ab.ca

